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OFFICE OF
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

April 3, 2012

Kathleen Baskin, P.E.
Director of Water Policy
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, 9th floor
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Massachusetts Sustainable Water Management Initiative Framework

Dear Ms. Baskin,

The Brewster Conservation Commission (BCC) has been informed that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has created a new system for categorizing rivers and streams. The BCC credits the state on recognizing the scientific need to improve flows in river sub-basins which are currently suffering from excessive withdrawals, and to maintain healthy flows in the remaining river sub-basins.

However, the BCC believes the state's proposed "safe yield" for healthy flows; its uniform application throughout the year which allows excessive withdrawals during summer and fall low-flow periods – could lead to the ecological impairment of Massachusetts' rivers and other freshwater wetlands and their related interests.

The Brewster Conservation Commission urges the state to consider these concerns, and to apply good science on stream flows in its revised "safe yield" approach to permitting and water management, for the protection of rivers and streams across the Commonwealth throughout the year.

Yours truly,

Stephen McKenna,
Chairman,
Brewster Conservation Commission

SM:cs
Cc: Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions